

Information taken from application. #400- 1959
Applied for Profession, was not accepted.
CONFIDENTIAL RECORD SHEET
DIVISION OF PERSONNEL
B.S.A.

DATE Sept. 25, 1961

Full Name Stensland, Neil Francis
(No initials if you can possibly get full name)

Address 10231 Avondale Road

City Redmond State Washington

Age 35 (This is important and should be exact)

Approximate age _____ (To be used ONLY when exact age is not known)

Religion Prot. Nationality _____

Occupation Prod. Super. Salesman, Act. Mgr.

Education College (Seattle University)

Weight 156 Color W Height 5'11 1/2"

Color of hair Brown Color of eyes Brown

Outstanding characteristics or interests _____

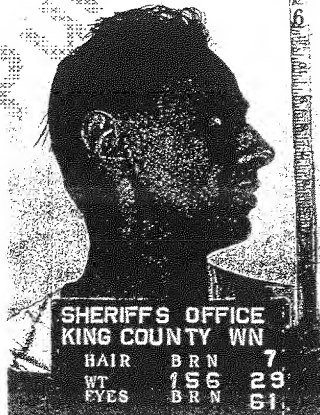
Married or single Single (1959) Children _____
(Number, ages, and names, if possible)

Wife's name _____

SCOUTING CONNECTIONS:

Unit #	City	State	Office	Date Reg'd.	Date resigned
--------	------	-------	--------	-------------	---------------

Made application for the Profession, was not approved.

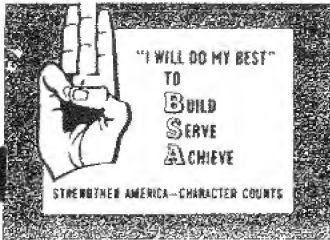


ns:

Scout Executive

TSBSA011551

DYKES_I_012665



BOY SCOUTS OF AMERICA • NATIONAL COUNCIL • NEW BRUNSWICK, N. J.

FOR INTRA-ORGANIZATION COMMUNICATION

AUGUST 30, 1961

MR. GEORGE K. MYERS
SCOUT EXECUTIVE
CHIEF SEATTLE COUNCIL, No. 609

PERSONAL AND CONFIDENTIAL
RE: NEIL STENSLAND

DEAR GEORGE:

THANK YOU SO VERY MUCH FOR YOUR COMPLETE REPORT CONCERNING NEIL STENSLAND. I THOROUGHLY AGREE WITH YOU THAT THE COUNCIL ACTED WISELY AND YOU WILL SEE THAT I HAVE TOLD MRS. [REDACTED] SO.

I AM ALSO ENCLOSING A COPY OF THE LETTER I WROTE TO YOUR COUNCIL PRESIDENT. NATURALLY, IT ISN'T NECESSARY TO SAY THAT I APPRECIATE HIS FINE LETTER A GREAT DEAL.

SINCERELY YOURS,
PERSONNEL DIVISION

Basil F. Starkey
BASIL F. STARKEY

DIRECTOR OF REGISTRATION

BFS:DES

ENCLS.

P.S.

I AM ENCLOSING A PARTIALLY COMPLETED CONFIDENTIAL RECORD SHEET ON MR. STENSLAND. PLEASE COMPLETE IT AND RETURN IT FOR OUR FILES. WE CERTAINLY HAVE ENOUGH SUPPORTING EVIDENCE SO THAT NO COMMENTS WILL BE NECESSARY ON THE FORM ITSELF EXCEPT YOUR SIGNATURE.

BFS

TSBSA011552

DYKES_I_012666

AUGUST 30, 1961

Mr. CHARLES F. OSBORN
BOGLE, BOGLE & GATES
6TH FLOOR CENTRAL BUILDING
SEATTLE 4, WASHINGTON

PERSONAL AND CONFIDENTIAL

DEAR MR. OSBORN:

I APPRECIATE YOUR THOUGHTFULNESS IN WRITING SUCH A COMPLETE REPORT ON THE NEIL STENSLAND MATTER. WE CERTAINLY HAVE PLENTY OF AMMUNITION TO ANSWER MRS. [REDACTED] LETTER AND I HAVE ANSWERED HER AS PER COPY ENCLOSED.

IN MY OPINION ALL OF YOU SHOWED GOOD JUDGEMENT AND CERTAINLY, MRS. [REDACTED] S CHARGE OF A DO NOTHING ATTITUDE IS COMPLETELY GROUNDED.
LESS.

THANKS AGAIN AND BEST WISHES.

SINCERELY YOURS,
BOY SCOUTS OF AMERICA
PERSONNEL DIVISION

BASIL F. STARKEY
DIRECTOR OF REGISTRATION

BFS:DES

ENCL.

CC: GEORGE R. MYERS, Co. 609

TSBSA011553

DYKES_I_012667

September 28, 1961

Mr. George R. Myers, Scout Executive
Chief Seattle Council, No. 609
3120 Fairview Avenue
Seattle 44, Washington

PERSONAL AND CONFIDENTIAL
Re: Neil Stensland

Dear George:

Thank you for the final and complete report on Neil Stensland.
It is not clear to me where we got the information, but I find
he did at one time make application for the Profession. We
have taken the necessary description from this application.

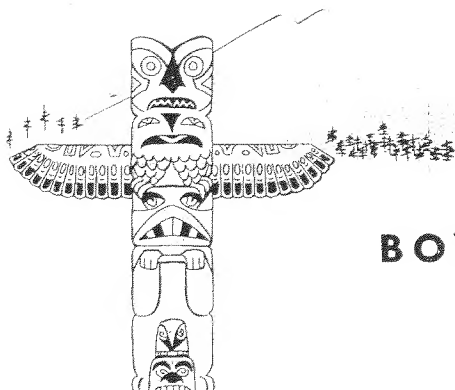
Sincerely yours,
PERSONNEL DIVISION

Basil P. Starley
Director of Registration

BFS:mlh

TSBSA011554

DYKES_I_012668



BOY SCOUTS OF AMERICA
CHIEF SEATTLE COUNCIL

September 18, 1961

3120 RAINIER AVE. SO.
SEATTLE 44, WASH.
BARKWAY 5-5200
COUNCIL NO. 609

Mr. Basil F. Starkey
National Council
Boy Scouts of America
New Brunswick, New Jersey

Dear Bay:

Enclosed please find the completed report dated August 16, 1961, from the office of Tim McCullough, Sheriff, King County State of Washington, concerning Neil Francis Stensland's confidential file.

I believe this will complete our report on Mr. Stensland for the confidential file.

Best personal regards.

Cordially yours,

George K. Myers,
Scout Executive

GKM:aw
encl. (report from Tim McCullough)

Council President:
CHARLES F. OSBORN

Scout Executive:
GEORGE K. MYERS

Council Commissioner:
H. ELMER WORCESTER

TSBSA011555

DYKES_I_012669



CONFIDENTIAL

SEP 15 1961

King County

STATE OF WASHINGTON

Seattle

ZONE 4

OFFICE OF
TIM McCULLOUGH
SHERIFF
TELEPHONE MAIN 2-6688

August 16, 1961

Mr. George K. Myers
Executive Director
Boy Scouts of America
3120 Rainier Avenue South
Seattle 44, Washington

RE: STENSLAND, NEIL FRANCIS, W/M/35 yrs.
dob 5-6-26; height 5' 11"; weight 156 lbs.;
brown hair; brown eyes; med. build; med.
complexion; Norwegian decent.

Dear Mr. Myers:

In compliance with your request we are summarizing herewith the case we have investigated involving the above subject, and our basis for procedure in future hearings on this case.

This office received information from the Redmond, Washington Police Department to the effect that five Boy Scouts had walked away from a Scout Camp while on a hike in the Cascade Mountains. Neil Stensland had been assisting the Scout Leader on this hike.

Mr. Stensland was interrogated in our office on July 31, 1961 and on August 1, 1961 and gave statements in which he admitted oral sodomy, rectal sodomy, mutual masturbation and indecent liberties with six boys from the same Troup dating from approximately March 4, 1961 and prior to July, 1961. He was charged with Indecent Liberties, bail set at \$3,000.00 and placed in the County Jail. At the hearing on August 16, 1961, he, Stensland, pled guilty and his case bound over to Superior Court. The date for the Superior Court hearing has not been set, as yet, pending further investigation.

Our present charges against Mr. Stensland cover Indecent Liberties with only two of these boys. We have the further intention of placing additional charges against Stensland to include oral sodomy, rectal sodomy and possibly one or more additional charges of Indecent Liberties, all of which he admitted committing with one or more of the six boys at various times.

We hope this summary will be sufficient. If there are further questions regarding this case, please do not hesitate to call us for clarification.

Sincerely yours,

TIM McCULLOUGH
Sheriff of King County

Florence Ross

By: FLORENCE ROSS
Captain, Juvenile Bureau

FR:me

TSBSA011556

DYKES_I_012670

8/30/61

Made Case
Professional

Mr. Starkey said hold
file until letter comes.

TS/MS/KS v. BSA et al. Cause No. 03-23711-0
Produced Pursuant to Protective Order

TSBSA011557

DYKES_I_012671

August 30, 1961

Mr. [REDACTED]
[REDACTED]
[REDACTED], Washington

Dear [REDACTED]:

I promised you in my letter of August 6 a more complete answer to your letter of August 4.

I have in front of me a full report from the Council who was represented by Mr. Donald E. Hall whom you mention and Mr. Charles F. Osborn the Council President. Mr. Osborn's report is attested to by Mr. Russell Thompson who is the Chief of Police. All of these reports lead me to believe that the Council acted in good faith when they followed the advice of Police Chief Thompson. Mr. Thompson did advise the King County Sheriff's Office and full arrangements were made to follow through.

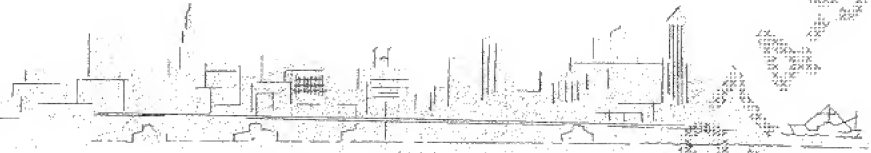
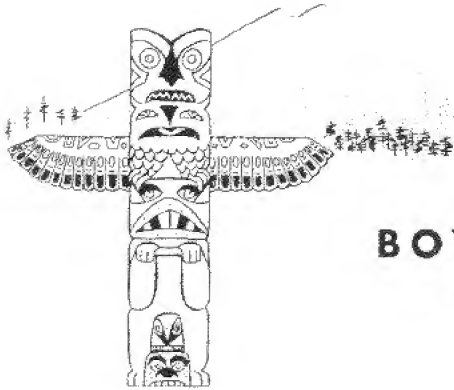
As I analyze the situation the Council evidently decided to accept the advice of Police Chief Thompson as did apparently the majority of the parents. You did not agree with this judgment, and certainly this is your privilege to question, but what was done could not be referred to as a do nothing attitude and I am sure you will agree that these men who are interested in the lives of both boys as you are, did do something. As Osborn stated, you may not agree with their judgment, but they did follow a course of action.

You will be interested to know that events were rather quickly after the boys came down from the mountains as had been planned. The Council has been working very closely with Mr. Rantzen and we will have his full report very shortly.

I must also tell you that the Council has been working very close with the Second American Legion, Post 516 which sponsors Troop 411. Their plans in my opinion are very wise, and I know they will do whatever they feel is best for the boys in the troop.

TSBSA011558

DYKES_I_012672



BOY SCOUTS OF AMERICA
CHIEF SEATTLE COUNCIL

August 22, 1961

3120 RAINIER AVE.
SEATTLE 44, WASH.
PARKWAY 5-5200
COUNCIL NO. 609

Mr. Basil F. Starkey
Director of Registration
Boy Scouts of America
National Council
New Brunswick, N. J.

Dear Bay:

The incident referred to in Mrs. [REDACTED]'s letter occurred while I was away on my vacation but I would give my complete support to the way in which it was handled.

Enclosed you will find:

1. Report from Don Hall of our staff.
2. Report from Council President, Charles F. Osborn.
3. A report from the King County Sheriff's office will be forwarded shortly.

Until the incident occurred there was no knowledge of the sexual deviation of Neil Stensland by anyone among the parents of the boys, officials of the American Legion Post, or members of the District Committee or Council.

It can hardly be said that the council did nothing because within an hour after the report was received the Council President, Assistant Scout Executive and Director of Camping, Organization and Extension met with the parents.

The interrogation of the boys by the Police Chief disclosed no evidence of any sexual misdemeanor. No one knew just where the Troop was located in the mountains. The Redmond Police Chief supported the Council's position as did the majority of the parents.

Council President:
CHARLES F. OSBORN

Scout Executive:
GEORGE K. MYERS

Council Commissioner:
WILLIAM F. WHITE

TSBSA011560

DYKES_I_012674

Page two
8/17/61

When the report on Neil Stensland was reviewed with the King County Sheriff's office an order was issued to arrest Neil Stensland as the Troop came out of the mountains a day and a half later. This was done. There is no evidence that Neil Stensland's brother - the Scoutmaster of Troop 423, Dick Stensland has ever done or said anything improper.

Redmond American Legion, Post No. 16, sponsors Troop 423. Its officials were embarrassed by the whole affair and the council is now working with the American Legion, and the parents to restore confidence in the program and the Troop. We feel a new Scoutmaster should be selected since confidence has been lost in Dick Stensland although his record is clear.

Neil Stensland was a neighborhood commissioner from October, 1959 to May, 1960. He has not re-registered since that time.

We request that Neil Stensland be placed in the confidential file permanently.

Cordially yours,

George
George K. Myers,
Scout Executive

GKM:aw
encl.

Please note additional copy of Mr. [REDACTED] letter on which Police Chief Russell Thorp of Redmond verifies Mr. [REDACTED] comments. Mr. Gordon Hartshorn of the King County Sheriff's Office is on vacation. Upon his return we will forward his report.

Also enclosed please find picture and description of Neil Stensland.

TSBSA011561

DYKES_I_012675

W. H. BOGLE-1927
WARREN BROWN, JR.-1941
RAY DUMETT-1947

LAWRENCE BOGLE
CASSIUS E. GATES
EDWARD G. DOBRIN
CLAUDE E. WAKEFIELD
STANLEY B. LONG
GEORGE F. KACHLEIN, JR.
FRANK L. MECHEM
DONALD E. LELAND
ROBERT W. GRAHAM
CHARLES F. OSBORN
EDW. S. FRANKLIN
TOM M. ALDERSON
THOMAS L. MORROW
ORLO B. KELLOGG
MAX KAMINOFF
ROBERT V. HOLLAND
J. TYLER HULL
J. KENNETH BRODY

LAW OFFICES OF

BOGLE, BOGLE & GATES

5TH FLOOR CENTRAL BUILDING

SEATTLE 4

CABLE ADDRESS: "BOGLE SEATTLE"

MUTUAL 2-5151

ARTHUR C. GROEKE
M. BAYARD CRUTCHER
EDWARD G. BELE
WALTER B. WILLIAMS
RONALD E. PERKINS
GEORGE N. PRINCE
ROBERT A. STEWART
CHARLES S. SPRAGUE
JACOB A. MIKKELBORG
DONALD L. JOHNSON
LEWIS L. TREIGER
HOWARD PAUL BADGLEY
JOHN P. SULLIVAN
EDWARD G. LOWRY, III
RONALD T. SCHAPS
THOMAS H. S. BRUCKER
YANCEY RESER

August 16, 1961

Mr. Basil F. Starkey
Director of Registration
Boy Scouts of America
National Council
New Brunswick, New Jersey

Dear Mr. Starkey:

Mr. Myers has given me a copy of Mrs. [REDACTED]'s letter of August 4th together with your letter of August 8, 1961, in order that I may advise you in detail of the participation of the Chief Seattle Council in the investigation of the problem set forth in Mrs. [REDACTED]'s letter.

Some time ago, George Myers, at my request, advised all professional staff members that I should be immediately informed as to certain matters concerning accidents, public relations problems and similar matters in which publicity might likely result. In accordance with this instruction, Robert Lamm called me at 5:15 on Thursday, July 27, 1961, and advised me that he had received a call from a parent in Redmond, Washington, stating that a parents' meeting of Troop 423 was being held at 6:00 o'clock that evening to review a very serious situation arising out of the alleged misconduct of one of two adults on a troop hike. During the vacation of George Myers, Bob Lamm, as Assistant Executive, was in charge of the office. I immediately left for the Service Center as I realized that this could be a very serious situation with possible adverse publicity. At the Service Center, I was joined by Bob Lamm and Don Hall, Director of Camping, and we immediately proceeded to Redmond and went to the residence where the meeting was held.

At the meeting, we found that a number of parents had gathered, together with Russell Thorp, the Chief of Police of Redmond and a Sergeant. We were advised that a group of boys from Troop 423, and a smaller number from Troop 613, had gone on a hike in the Cascade Mountains above Skykomish in Snohomish County (Redmond is in King

TSBSA011562

DYKES_I_012676

Mr. Basil F. Starkey
August 16, 1961
Page 2

County as is Seattle). They had left the preceding Saturday under the direction of Dick Stensland, Scout Master, who was accompanied by his brother, Neil Stensland, a neighborhood Commissioner. On Wednesday, July 26th, five boys from Troop 423 left the camping area at about 10:00 A.M. without permission, but left a note that they were leaving. They hiked some nine hours to the highway where they were observed and their parents were informed as to their location, as set forth in Mrs. [REDACTED]'s letter. When the parents questioned the boys as to why they had left, they indicated that they were dissatisfied with the hiking conditions and that they were particularly critical of the food and lack of food. One mother, who together with Mrs. [REDACTED] took the leadership in calling the parents together, learned from a sixteen year old son (who was not a scout) named [REDACTED], that he suspected the real reason that the boys had left was because of the conduct of Neil Stensland. The mother then questioned the boy further and he advised her of an attempted act of sexual misconduct by Neil some months earlier. When his mother questioned him as to why he had not reported the incident earlier, he stated that Neil had been drinking and that he had considered he should overlook the matter since Neil, in his opinion, was under the influence of alcohol. After this story was spread among the parents, further questioning of the boys by the parents indicated that Neil apparently was immodest in his personal conduct which disturbed some of the younger boys.

At the meeting, the Police Chief and his assistant interviewed each of the five boys separately and no boy reported any overt act of misconduct on the part of Neil Stensland. The nearest thing to misconduct was a statement by one boy that Neil placed his hand on his thigh while going through a cave. At the conclusion of the interviews, the Chief of Police invited myself, Bob Lamm and Don Hall to meet with him and the Sergeant to decide upon what action to take. The statement in Mrs. [REDACTED]'s letter that the interview disclosed "conflicting stories of mal-treatment mixed with sex perversion" is absolutely contrary to fact. If this fact is important, it can be verified by writing to Russell Thorp, Chief of Police, Redmond, Washington.

It was 8:00 P.M. at that time, and we were advised that the boys were expected to return to the main highway Saturday morning. We considered the fact that Dick Stensland, the Scout Master, has an excellent record and that the immodest conduct of Neil (which consisted of improper con-

TSBSA011563

DYKES_I_012677

Mr. Basil F. Starkey
August 16, 1961
Page 3

versation and delay in dressing himself in the morning) apparently occurred when Dick and Neil had separated their groups with the older boys going into the mountains with Dick. We were certain that Neil would behave in the presence of his brother Dick, and we were of the opinion that by Thursday night the two groups must have rejoined as it would take them most of Friday to get back to the road since they were fifteen miles in from the highway. There was nothing in the report of any boy which indicated that any scout was in any physical danger.

The Chief of Police recommended that no search party be sent out in view of the facts, but agreed that he would immediately call the Sheriff of Snohomish County to be at the highway Saturday morning to make certain that the boys came out on schedule. If any misconduct occurred on the hike, the matter would be in the jurisdiction of the Sheriff's Department of Snohomish County. With regard to the alleged incident which occurred in the presence of Donnie, the Chief stated that he would immediately call the Prosecutor's Office in King County and that the matter would be referred to Gordon Hartshorn, a specialist in juvenile morals matters.

When we advised the parents that we concurred in the recommendation of the Chief, the parents agreed that no "rescue" effort should be attempted with the exception of Mrs. [REDACTED] and the mother of [REDACTED]. Mrs. [REDACTED] became quite emotional and accused us of "doing nothing" as recited in her letter to you. Mrs. [REDACTED] had several very small children with her and appeared to be very distraught. She asked me to call the Mountain Rescue Council to get the boys out, which group would have to come from Everett as the area is in the jurisdiction of the Everett group. In view of the fact that such an operation requires many men to give up a day's work without reimbursement, I did not feel justified to call upon them to do so. After discussing the matter further with Mrs. [REDACTED], I learned that she had already called the Mountain Rescue Council and had been advised that it would not make a search. I further told her that the Chief Seattle Council has no organization to handle a matter of this type other than our own Search and Rescue Organization under Don Wilson. Don has a number of Explorer Scouts who would obviously have to be advised of the reason for the expedition, which would involve more

TSBSA011564

DYKES_I_012678

Mr. Basil F. Starkey
August 16, 1961
Page 4

boys, more conversation, and more unfortunate publicity. Likewise, if any "rescue" party approached the group, it would have no authority over Neil or Dick Stensland, because the problem is a law enforcement problem and enforcement officers alone could take the men into custody. I pointed this fact out to her and told her further that the only other group that had jurisdiction over the hikers and their leaders would be the parents themselves. At the time of the meeting, no father indicated that he was willing to undertake the hike. In view of the rugged terrain in which these boys were hiking, it would be quite possible for a "rescue" party to miss the group entirely even if they were lead by one of the five boys who had previously come out. A helicopter search was suggested, which would be impractical, as it would be difficult to pick the group out once it went below the timberline.

Mr. Calvin Schults, the Troop Chairman of 423, was extremely vocal and adamant that the boys were safe and that he had full confidence in Dick Stensland to handle the situation. Some parents raised the question as to adequate food since the boys had contributed only \$5 each for a week's food supply. Calvin Schults pointed out that Dick Stensland, to his own knowledge, bought a hundred dollars worth of groceries at his own expense for this particular hike. Mr. Schults was extremely critical of all parents present for their failure to participate in troop activities and stated that this matter would never have occurred if Dick Stensland had received support on his hiking program from other parents in which event it would not have been necessary to call on his brother Neil to help him.

We were very impressed with the sound judgment and leadership of Russell Thorp, Chief of Police of Redmond. After his discussion, all parents agreed with the decision that the boys would be permitted to continue their hike, except Mrs. [REDACTED] and the mother of [REDACTED]. Apparently after we left, the two women continued their tirade, and from Mrs. [REDACTED]'s letter, she was able to get several men to hike into the boys and to accelerate their return at 1:00 A. M. Saturday. She does not indicate in her letter whether the "local men" were parents, and I would assume that they were not. The "rescue effort" only brought about the boys' return about eleven hours ahead of schedule. If an adult in the rescue party had been injured or lost, as often

TSBSA011565

DYKES_I_012679

Mr. Basil F. Starkey
August 16, 1961
Page 5

happens in our mountains, the situation could have been extremely serious. There is a great danger of falling rock in these areas and victims include not only inexperienced but also experienced hikers. Unfortunately, we had such an accident only two weeks ago on one of our Council hiking programs which resulted in a fractured leg near the same area.

The Chief of Police told the parents that he would interview every boy on the hike when the boys returned and that he would forward all information to the proper authorities, which he did. It now appears that Neil Stensland is definitely a pervert, not as a result of his conduct on this particular hike, but as a result of admissions on his part involving other boys in the community at an earlier time. It is a matter of serious concern to the juvenile officer that in discussing this matter throughout the community, as Mrs. [REDACTED] has done, it has seriously injured the reputations of the boys involved to the embarrassment of their families. According to Mr. Hartshorn, this need not have occurred if the matter had been left entirely in the hands of law enforcement officials.

The decision not to call upon our Search and Rescue Council was my personal decision and any responsibility for that decision rests entirely with me. Despite the fact that hindsight now shows that Neil Stensland is a juvenile sex offender and must be removed entirely from scouting, I am positive that we came to the right decision as subsequent events proved. There was no reason for Mrs. [REDACTED] to anticipate that Neil was a "madman" and would do bodily harm to any of the boys. She talked wildly about Neil pushing a boy off of a mountain, which statement had no basis in fact. Getting the boys out ahead of schedule may have relieved the concern of the parents, but I can only imagine the effect on the boys, most of whom had no idea as to what the trouble was all about. As a parent with two boys in scouting myself, I would be very concerned about my boys hiking through the mountains in the dark even under able leadership.

Both Bob Lamm and Don Hall have kept in touch with the matter since the meeting on July 27th, and all

Mr. Basil F. Starkey
August 16, 1961
Page 6

things necessary to protect scouting have been or will be done. The District Chairman, Dr. Ernest McKibben, is reviewing the matter of replacing Dick Stensland as Scout Master, not because he was involved in any way, but because he will probably lose his effectiveness as a Scout Master in view of his brother's conduct. The American Legion, which sponsors Troop 423, is attempting to have Neil Stensland sent to a Veterans Hospital for treatment, as every indication is that he is mentally sick and not a criminal.

The National Council would have been informed of this episode as soon as all facts had been gathered in order that Neil Stensland would be put on the "red tag" list. The fact that Mrs. [REDACTED]'s letter reached you ahead of our report was due to the fact that Mr. Hall was waiting to hear from Mr. Hartshorn, for until his investigation was completed, there was no solid proof of Mr. Stensland's misconduct.

If you have any further questions which have not been answered by my report, or the report of Don Hall, please advise me.

Very truly yours,



President
Chief Seattle Council
Boy Scouts of America

cc: Mr. George K. Myers
PERSONAL AND CONFIDENTIAL

TSBSA011567

DYKES_I_012681

W. H. BOGLE - 1927
WARREN BROWN, JR. - 1941
RAY DUMETT - 1947

LAWRENCE BOGLE
CASSIUS E. GATES
EDWARD G. DOBRIK
CLAUDE E. WAKEFIELD
STANLEY B. LONG
GEORGE F. KACHLEIN, JR.
FRANK L. MECHEM
DONALD C. LELAND
ROBERT W. GRAHAM
CHARLES F. OSBORN
EDW. S. FRANKLIN
TOM M. ALDERSON
THOMAS L. MORROW
ORLO B. KELLOGG
MAX KAMINOFF
ROBERT V. HOLLAND
J. TYLER HULL
J. KENNETH BRODY

LAW OFFICES OF

BOGLE, BOGLE & GATES

6TH FLOOR CENTRAL BUILDING

SEATTLE 4

CABLE ADDRESS: "BOGLE SEATTLE"

MUTUAL 2-5151

COPY

ANTHONY G. GRUBER
M. BAYARD CROUCHER
EDWARD S. BIELE
WALTER B. WILLIAMS
RONALD E. WIKINSTRY
GEORGE N. PRINCE
ROBERT A. STEWART
RICHARD S. SPRAGUE
SCOB A. HIKELBORG
DONALD L. JOHNSON
IRWIN L. TREIGER
HAROLD PAUL BADCLEY
JOHN P. SULLIVAN
EDWARD G. LOWRY, III
RONALD T. SCHAPS
THOMAS H. S. BRUCKER
VANCEY RESER

August 16, 1961

Mr. Basil F. Starkey
Director of Registration
Boy Scouts of America
National Council
New Brunswick, New Jersey

Dear Mr. Starkey:

Mr. Myers has given me a copy of Mrs. [REDACTED]'s letter of August 4th together with your letter of August 8, 1961, in order that I may advise you in detail of the participation of the Chief Seattle Council in the investigation of the problem set forth in Mrs. [REDACTED]'s letter.

Some time ago, George Myers, at my request, advised all professional staff members that I should be immediately informed as to certain matters concerning accidents, public relations problems and similar matters in which publicity might likely result. In accordance with this instruction, Robert Lamm called me at 5:15 on Thursday, July 27, 1961, and advised me that he had received a call from a parent in Redmond, Washington, stating that a parents' meeting of Troop 423 was being held at 6:00 o'clock that evening to review a very serious situation arising out of the alleged misconduct of one of two adults on a troop hike. During the vacation of George Myers, Bob Lamm, as Assistant Executive, was in charge of the office. I immediately left for the Service Center as I realized that this could be a very serious situation with possible adverse publicity. At the Service Center, I was joined by Bob Lamm and Don Hall, Director of Camping, and we immediately proceeded to Redmond and went to the residence where the meeting was held.

At the meeting, we found that a number of parents had gathered, together with Russell Thorp, the Chief of Police of Redmond and a Sergeant. We were advised that a group of boys from Troop 423, and a smaller number from Troop 613, had gone on a hike in the Cascade Mountains above Skykomish in Snohomish County (Redmond is in King

TSBSA011568

DYKES_I_012682

Mr. Basil F. Starkey
August 16, 1961
Page 2

County as is Seattle). They had left the preceding Saturday under the direction of Dick Stensland, Scout Master, who was accompanied by his brother, Neil Stensland, a neighborhood Commissioner. On Wednesday, July 26th, five boys from Troop 423 left the camping area at about 10:00 A.M. without permission, but left a note that they were leaving. They hiked some nine hours to the highway where they were observed and their parents were informed as to their location, as set forth in Mrs. [REDACTED]'s letter. When the parents questioned the boys as to why they had left, they indicated that they were dissatisfied with the hiking conditions and that they were particularly critical of the food and lack of food. One mother, who together with Mrs. [REDACTED] took the leadership in calling the parents together, learned from a sixteen year old son (who was not a scout) named [REDACTED], that he suspected the real reason that the boys had left was because of the conduct of Neil Stensland. The mother then questioned the boy further and he advised her of an attempted act of sexual misconduct by Neil some months earlier. When his mother questioned him as to why he had not reported the incident earlier, he stated that Neil had been drinking and that he had considered he should overlook the matter since Neil, in his opinion, was under the influence of alcohol. After this story was spread among the parents, further questioning of the boys by the parents indicated that Neil apparently was immodest in his personal conduct which disturbed some of the younger boys.

At the meeting, the Police Chief and his assistant interviewed each of the five boys separately and no boy reported any overt act of misconduct on the part of Neil Stensland. The nearest thing to misconduct was a statement by one boy that Neil placed his hand on his thigh while going through a cave. At the conclusion of the interviews, the Chief of Police invited myself, Bob Lamm and Don Hall to meet with him and the Sergeant to decide upon what action to take. The statement in Mrs. [REDACTED]'s letter that the interview disclosed "conflicting stories of mal-treatment mixed with sex perversion" is absolutely contrary to fact. If this fact is important, it can be verified by writing to Russell Thorp, Chief of Police, Redmond, Washington.

It was 8:00 P.M. at that time, and we were advised that the boys were expected to return to the main highway Saturday morning. We considered the fact that Dick Stensland, the Scout Master, has an excellent record and that the immodest conduct of Neil (which consisted of improper con-

TSBSA011569

DYKES_I_012683

Mr. Basil F. Starkey
August 16, 1961
Page 3

versation and delay in dressing himself in the morning) apparently occurred when Dick and Neil had separated their groups with the older boys going into the mountains with Dick. We were certain that Neil would behave in the presence of his brother Dick, and we were of the opinion that by Thursday night the two groups must have rejoined as it would take them most of Friday to get back to the road since they were fifteen miles in from the highway. There was nothing in the report of any boy which indicated that any scout was in any physical danger.

The Chief of Police recommended that no search party be sent out in view of the facts, but agreed that he would immediately call the Sheriff of Snohomish County to be at the highway Saturday morning to make certain that the boys came out on schedule. If any misconduct occurred on the hike, the matter would be in the jurisdiction of the Sheriff's Department of Snohomish County. With regard to the alleged incident which occurred in the presence of Donnie, the Chief stated that he would immediately call the Prosecutor's Office in King County and that the matter would be referred to Gordon Hartshorn, a specialist in juvenile morals matters.

When we advised the parents that we concurred in the recommendation of the Chief, the parents agreed that no "rescue" effort should be attempted with the exception of Mrs. [REDACTED] and the mother of [REDACTED]. Mrs. [REDACTED] became quite emotional and accused us of "doing nothing" as recited in her letter to you. Mrs. [REDACTED] had several very small children with her and appeared to be very distraught. She asked me to call the Mountain Rescue Council to get the boys out, which group would have to come from Everett as the area is in the jurisdiction of the Everett group. In view of the fact that such an operation requires many men to give up a day's work without reimbursement, I did not feel justified to call upon them to do so. After discussing the matter further with Mrs. [REDACTED], I learned that she had already called the Mountain Rescue Council and had been advised that it would not make a search. I further told her that the Chief Seattle Council has no organization to handle a matter of this type other than our own Search and Rescue Organization under Don Wilson. Don has a number of Explorer Scouts who would obviously have to be advised of the reason for the expedition, which would involve more

TSBSA011570

DYKES_I_012684

Mr. Basil F. Starkey
August 16, 1961
Page 4

boys, more conversation, and more unfortunate publicity. Likewise, if any "rescue" party approached the group, it would have no authority over Neil or Dick Stensland, because the problem is a law enforcement problem and enforcement officers alone could take the men into custody. I pointed this fact out to her and told her further that the only other group that had jurisdiction over the hikers and their leaders would be the parents themselves. At the time of the meeting, no father indicated that he was willing to undertake the hike. In view of the rugged terrain in which these boys were hiking, it would be quite possible for a "rescue" party to miss the group entirely even if they were lead by one of the five boys who had previously come out. A helicopter search was suggested, which would be impractical, as it would be difficult to pick the group out once it went below the timberline.

Mr. Calvin Schults, the Troop Chairman of 423, was extremely vocal and adamant that the boys were safe and that he had full confidence in Dick Stensland to handle the situation. Some parents raised the question as to adequate food since the boys had contributed only \$5 each for a week's food supply. Calvin Schults pointed out that Dick Stensland, to his own knowledge, bought a hundred dollars worth of groceries at his own expense for this particular hike. Mr. Schults was extremely critical of all parents present for their failure to participate in troop activities and stated that this matter would never have occurred if Dick Stensland had received support on his hiking program from other parents in which event it would not have been necessary to call on his brother Neil to help him.

We were very impressed with the sound judgment and leadership of Russell Thorp, Chief of Police of Redmond. After his discussion, all parents agreed with the decision that the boys would be permitted to continue their hike, except Mrs. [REDACTED] and the mother of [REDACTED]. Apparently after we left, the two women continued their tirade, and from Mrs. [REDACTED]'s letter, she was able to get several men to hike into the boys and to accelerate their return at 1:00 A. M. Saturday. She does not indicate in her letter whether the "local men" were parents, and I would assume that they were not. The "rescue effort" only brought about the boys' return about eleven hours ahead of schedule. If an adult in the rescue party had been injured or lost, as often

TSBSA011571

DYKES_I_012685

Mr. Basil F. Starkey
August 16, 1961
Page 5

happens in our mountains, the situation could have been extremely serious. There is a great danger of falling rock in these areas and victims include not only inexperienced but also experienced hikers. Unfortunately, we had such an accident only two weeks ago on one of our Council hiking programs which resulted in a fractured leg near the same area.

The Chief of Police told the parents that he would interview every boy on the hike when the boys returned and that he would forward all information to the proper authorities, which he did. It now appears that Neil Stensland is definitely a pervert, not as a result of his conduct on this particular hike, but as a result of admissions on his part involving other boys in the community at an earlier time. It is a matter of serious concern to the juvenile officer that in discussing this matter throughout the community, as Mrs. [REDACTED] has done, it has seriously injured the reputations of the boys involved to the embarrassment of their families. According to Mr. Hartshorn, this need not have occurred if the matter had been left entirely in the hands of law enforcement officials.

The decision not to call upon our Search and Rescue Council was my personal decision and any responsibility for that decision rests entirely with me. Despite the fact that hindsight now shows that Neil Stensland is a juvenile sex offender and must be removed entirely from scouting, I am positive that we came to the right decision as subsequent events proved. There was no reason for Mrs. [REDACTED] to anticipate that Neil was a "madman" and would do bodily harm to any of the boys. She talked wildly about Neil pushing a boy off of a mountain, which statement had no basis in fact. Getting the boys out ahead of schedule may have relieved the concern of the parents, but I can only imagine the effect on the boys, most of whom had no idea as to what the trouble was all about. As a parent with two boys in scouting myself, I would be very concerned about my boys hiking through the mountains in the dark even under able leadership.

Both Bob Lamm and Don Hall have kept in touch with the matter since the meeting on July 27th, and all

Mr. Basil P. Starkey
August 16, 1961
Page 6

things necessary to protect scouting have been or will be done. The District Chairman, Dr. Ernest McKibben, is reviewing the matter of replacing Dick Stensland as Scout Master, not because he was involved in any way, but because he will probably lose his effectiveness as a Scout Master in view of his brother's conduct. The American Legion, which sponsors Troop 423, is attempting to have Neil Stensland sent to a Veterans Hospital for treatment, as every indication is that he is mentally sick and not a criminal.

The National Council would have been informed of this episode as soon as all facts had been gathered in order that Neil Stensland would be put on the "red tag" list. The fact that Mrs. [REDACTED] letter reached you ahead of our report was due to the fact that Mr. Hall was waiting to hear from Mr. Hartshorn, for until his investigation was completed, there was no solid proof of Mr. Stensland's misconduct.

If you have any further questions which have not been answered by my report, or the report of Don Hall, please advise me.

Very truly yours,

CHARLES F. OSBORN

President
Chief Seattle Council
Boy Scouts of America

cc: Mr. George K. Myers
PERSONAL AND CONFIDENTIAL

I have read the foregoing letter and it is a statement of facts as they appeared that evening. I am still of the opinion that the entire matter was handled properly relative to those in authority.

G. Hartshorn
Chief of Police
Redmond, Wash.

TSBSA011573

DYKES_I_012687

REPORT ON NEIL STENSLAND

On Thursday evening, July 27, 1961, at approximately 5:00 P. M., R. S. Lamm received a phone call from a Mrs. [REDACTED] of Redmond, Washington. She informed Mr. Lamm that there was to be a meeting at 6:00 P. M. at the Conkling home in Redmond of the parents of the boys in Troop 423 and some parents of boys in Troop 613 of Redmond.

Mrs. [REDACTED] indicated that five (5) boys from Troop 423 has just returned from a hike in the Cascade mountains in which Troop 423 and parts of Troop 613 were at that time engaged. The boys had left the hiking party without the permission of the hike leaders. The five boys claimed that the food was bad and inadequate, that the hike was difficult and that they didn't like one of the hike leaders, Neil Stensland, serving as Neighborhood Commissioner, because of his personal conduct and that they didn't want to continue with the hike. The rest of the leadership was made up of Dick Stensland, brother of Neil Stensland. Dick Stensland is the Scoutmaster of Troop 423.

Mr. Lamm contacted Charles Osborn, Council President, and myself and we went to Redmond to the Conkling home. Russell Thorp, the Redmond police chief was present at the home at that time. There were approximately 15 to 20 adults in the Conkling home in addition to at least half a dozen boys either in the house or on the immediate premises. Chief Thorp took charge of the meeting and indicated to the parents that he would like to interview the five (5) boys separately in order to help him determine exactly what action should be taken at this time. After interviewing the five (5) boys he invited Mr. Osborn, Mr. Lamm and myself into the kitchen where the interrogation had taken place. He indicated a plan of action to us and asked if we were in agreement with what he planned to do. The plan of action was essentially this: To notify the King County Sheriff's Department and have the Sheriff's Department pick up Neil Stensland at the completion of the hike on Saturday. Chief Thorp's interrogation had shown no evidence of an overt action on the part of Neil Stensland, except one boy reported Neil put his hand on his thigh. However, there was a good deal of evidence in the way Mr. Stensland talked and carried on that could not make him an acceptable leader of boys. Chief Thorp's decision to wait until the boys finished the hike was covered by three factors: 1. The lack of evidence of any overt action. 2. The hiking group was at least a day's hike away, and could not be reached until Saturday regardless if a group were sent in immediately. 3. No one really knew where the party was and actually what trails they had taken, other than they were in the Foss River area which had at least three different trail systems which the hiking group could be traveling.

After Chief Thorp outlined his plan of action to us, we agreed that it was the most logical plan to follow. Questioning of the boys had indicated that when Neil Stensland's brother Dick was around he did not engage in contact that could be called immoral. It was only when the hiking groups were split up and Neil was in a group separate from his brother that he appeared to be a problem. That the boys were in no immediate danger was another factor which affected Chief Thorp's decision. This Chief Thorp tried to explain to the parents. Then after some discussion all the parents with the exception of Mrs. [REDACTED] and Mrs. [REDACTED] went along with Chief Thorp's decision. Mrs.

TSBSA011574

DYKES_I_012688

██████ and Mrs. ██████ felt that the mountaineers should be called out and helicopters pressed into service. It was at this point that it was decided to be left up to the Sheriff's Department to take action. President Charles Osborn, Bob Lamm and myself then left the meeting and returned to Seattle.

The events that followed as I understand it are: Neil Stensland was arrested on Saturday, July 29th. One radio station (KVI) mentioned that Neil Stensland was arrested for taking indecent liberties with minors. There was no mention of the Boy Scouts of America. This is the only time to my knowledge that the case was made public. Chief Thorp asked the radio station KFKF in Bellevue not to mention it and it is my understanding that they cooperated. On Thursday, August 3rd, Mike Mazzone and myself met with Gordon Hartshorn who is in charge of the juvenile morals division of the King County Sheriff's Department. Mr. Hartshorn indicated that Neil Stensland is a very sick man and has sunk as low as it is possible for a homosexual to go. He indicated that he had ten confessions from Neil Stensland which could all be classified as felonies since in this State it is a felony to take indecent liberty with a minor. Mr. Mazzone and myself read the report of the ten different cases that he confessed to. However, during the hike itself there was no overt action taken against any of the boys. Mr. Hartshorn indicated that of the ten incidents that Neil Stensland confessed to he was sure there were many more since the ten cases dated back only to March, 1961. Mr. Stensland indicated that there were no other incidents than those ten he confessed to. Mr. Hartshorn, however, thought that this has been going on for a number of years.

Mr. Hartshorn said that the disposition of the case would probably be putting Neil Stensland in a Veteran's Hospital. He indicated that he was in definite need of psychiatric treatment and that he had talked over the situation with his father who agreed that this was the course of action he would like to have them take with his son. As far as Dick Stensland is concerned, this is no evidence that he has any homosexual tendencies. For additional information in regards to this case, I suggest the King County Sheriff's Department be contacted.

Submitted by: Donald E. Hall,
Director of Camping,
Organization & Extension
Boy Scouts of America
Chief Seattle Council

TSBSA011575

DYKES_I_012689

August 8, 1961

Mr. George E. Myers, Scout Executive
Chief Seattle Council, Box 609
3120 Rainier Avenue
Seattle 44, Washington

PERSONAL AND CONFIDENTIAL

Dear George:

I am attaching a copy of a letter received from Mrs. [REDACTED] and my reply. You will note that I have promised to answer her letter in more detail, but would like to have your side of the story before I do so.

If the Sheriff's Department has picked up Neil Stensland, perhaps it would be well to find out what Mr. Gordon Hartshorn of the Juvenile Department has to say about it.

According to our records, Mr. Richard Stensland is registered as Scoutmaster of Troop 423, Redmond, Washington.

Sincerely yours,
PERSONNEL DIVISION

Daryl F. Starkey
Director of Registration

BFS:mlh
Att.

TSBSA011576

DYKES_I_012690

August 8, 1961

[REDACTED]
Redmond, Washington

Dear [REDACTED]:

Your letter of August 4 has been referred to me since my department handles the matters you raised in your letter.

This is the first I have heard of the problem and at this moment will acknowledge your letter and promise to write in detail after I have investigated a little further.

Sincerely yours,
BOY SCOUTS OF AMERICA
PERSONNEL DIVISION

David F. Stacey
Director of Registration

BFS:jbw

Blend copy to Council 609

TSBSA011577

DYKES_I_012691

[REDACTED]
Redmond, Wn.

August 4, 1961

National Council, Boy Scouts of America
New Brunswick, N. J.

Dear Sirs,

Please investigate the Do-Nothing attitude taken by representatives of the Chief Seattle Council of the Boy Scouts of America in the recent morals case in Redmond, Washington!

Briefly, the story is this:

On the morning of July 22, 1961, about twenty boys from Boy Scout Troops 423 and 613 took off for an eight day hike in the Cascade Mountains. With them were Scout Master Dick Stensland ^(Troop 423) and his brother, Neil.

Four days later on Wednesday five of the boys hiked ~~out~~ to the highway and were given a ride to Skykomish.

TSBSA011578

DYKES_I_012692

where they called their parents about 8 p.m. at the instance of the woman who gave them the ride.

The parents went after the boys, arriving back home about midnight.

Eighteen hours later, on Thursday evening a meeting was called of all parents. Present were the Chief of Police of Redmond and his assistant, all available parents of the boys, on the hike, several men from Troop 613, the five boys involved, and three representatives from Chief Seattle Council, one of whom was Donald E. Hall.

The facts revealed were not pretty. The boys told conflicting stories of mal-treatment mixed with sex perversion.

The local policeman, after interrogating the boys, decided to do nothing but wait till Saturday

when The boys were due back.

We parents were told to do nothing and stay home!

Your men stated that this too would be their course. Do nothing!

May I point out that this activity was occurring in King County and not in the City of Redmond, and This case should have been brought to the attention of the Juvenile Department of the King County Sheriff.

We had no way of knowing if the boy's stories were true or not, but the fact remained that five boys had returned unscheduled bearing unpleasant tales, and no word had been sent out by the Scoutmaster explaining.

We could draw several conclusions:

- ① Perhaps the boys had been disciplined and were angry and were retaliating;
- ② Perhaps there was some horrible

When a three year old runs to his Mother and says, "Somebody's Choking the baby," does Mother say, "Leave him alone and he'll come home wagging his tail behind him." No, she goes to see if there is trouble.

In this area of mountains, we have many qualified men who could quickly have climbed up to where our boys were camped and inconspicuously checked on their activities. This definitely should have been done!

The least your men could have done was offer to send someone to find out what the problem was.

It's time that the Boy Scouts got prepared for such emergencies. This case is bad enough. Next time it may be worse. This sort of problem ought to be the business of every self-respecting human being.

TSBSA011581

DYKES_I_012695

activity going on up on the mountains;
(3) Perhaps something had happened to the Scoutmaster and the other boys — they could have fallen into a crevasse or got caught in an avalanche or drowned in the lake — and the frightened boys were afraid to tell.

But, we were advised to do nothing! And, so far as I can ascertain nothing was done by the "Council."

Fortunately, several local men did hike in to the boys — eight hours up and three hours back, and, subsequently, our boys were returned home about 1 a.m. Saturday.

Shortly thereafter the King County Sheriff's Department picked up Neil Stensland. For further details I suggest you contact Gordon Hartshorn, Juvenile Bureau, King County Sheriff's Seattle, Wn.

And, while this whole nasty business is being put to order, Boy Scout Troop 423 has been left high and dry. Who's business is it to see that they get their records and get transferred to other troops?

I want you to know that when this shocking news broke, my husband was in the hospital waiting to go into surgery; otherwise he and I would have gone to the mountain and hiked in to see for ourselves.

Sincerely,

